

Special Edition

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CHAMPS!



► NCAA DIVISION II SOFTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

Pitching lifts Lady Lions to title

By STACY CAMPBELL
SPORTS EDITOR

Missouri Southern has itself a national champion.

Behind strong pitching, solid defense, and timely hitting, the Lady Lion softball team was able to come away with a 1-0 victory over California State-Hayward on Sunday, May 17 in the NCAA Division II title game.

Southern's lone run came on junior Dana Presley's pinch-hit single with the bases loaded in the fifth inning. The single scored senior Carrie Carter, and was the only run sophomore pitcher Andrea Clarke needed.

"We got the bases loaded, and Dana has the potential to get the ball out of the infield, which is what we needed," said Pat Lipira, head coach. "We were actually looking for a sacrifice fly, but the hit was even

better."

Presley said getting the winning hit has not sunk in yet.

"When I saw Coach looking in the dugout, I thought, 'Oh no, she's looking for me,'" Presley said. "I missed the second [pitch], it was a good one, then the next one came right in the middle. I was up there praying."

Lipira and the players thought the hit showed what a team effort the championship required.

"Everyone has their moments, and it was Dana's turn," Lipira said.

Carter, from Paola, Kan., was glad to score the winning run on the field where she played when she was younger.

"It's a great feeling," Carter said. "This is where I grew up, and everything good has happened to me on these fields."

"I've worked all my life for this, and it's unbelievable. I don't even

have the words for it."

Carter also praised Lipira for her efforts in bringing this team together.

"We have so much talent on this team, not only on the field but on the bench as well," she said. "People always said in the years we went to nationals that you can't beat a California team or California's the team to beat. Well, we beat a California team and it feels good."

In its tournament opener, Southern defeated Saginaw Valley State (Mich.) 8-1, then edged Bloomsburg (Pa.) 1-0 in the winners' bracket game to advance to the championship.

"Two 1-0 games is great," Lipira said. "That is what fast-pitch softball is all about."

"We hit the tar out of the ball in the first game and had tough defensive teams in the last two. I am almost just numb."

Clarke won all three games in the

tournament and did not allow an earned run. In the championship, she did not allow a runner to reach third base. Clarke finished the season 31-2.

"Andrea Clarke is something else," Lipira said. "She is so intense on the mound, and she doesn't let things get her down. She had a fantastic year."

Fred Williams, Hayward coach, was equally impressed with Clarke's performance.

"Sometimes I found myself watching the pitcher, and nothing shook her up; she was in a groove," he said. "We heard their defense was suspect, but it came through today."

Clarke, a second-team All-American, had more to say about the team's accomplishments than her own.

"It's (the national championship) been a goal of ours, and it's unbelievable. I'm so happy we did it," she

said. "We reached our peak and played three great games."

Clarke said her success in the championship may have stemmed from watching other pitchers in the tournament face the Hayward hitters.

"All the other pitchers were throwing high, so we really concentrated and tried to throw low," she said.

"I am excited because we only had one run score against us, and we swept conference, regionals, and nationals," Lipira said.

"I think after we swept conference we knew we had a shot at winning it (nationals)."

Southern will have to replace six seniors: Miller, Carter, Konkol, Sharla Snow, Cheryl Kopf, and Renee Weih. Lipira knows filling their shoes will not be easy.

"These seniors, they will be really difficult to replace," she said.

TURNING TWO



CHAD HAYWORTH/The Chart

The Lady Lions' Katrina Marshall, shortstop, finishes off a sixth-inning double play in the NCAA Division II Softball Championship in Shawnee, Kan., Sunday. The team defeated California State in the final.

► OPENING ROUND

Offensive attack begins first game

By T.R. HANRAHAN
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Four first-inning runs and three-hit pitching from sophomore Andrea Clarke brought Missouri Southern closer to its first NCAA Division II softball title.

The 8-1 victory on Friday, May 15 over Saginaw Valley State University was the first win for an MIAA team in the national tournament and suitably impressed Art Gillis, Saginaw head coach.

"If that girl can pitch like that—if their pitching holds up—they can win it," Gillis said. "That shortstop (junior Katrina Marshall) is really something. She and their catcher (senior Diane Miller) really impressed me."

Gillis was not the only coach who

left the field impressed with Southern's opening-game performance.

"We dominated every part of the game," said Pat Lipira, head coach of the Lady Lions. "Thirteen hits and no errors [Southern did commit one error]—what a way to start this championship."

Southern's offensive barrage was led by junior rightfielder Leah Ingram's bases-loaded double to the right centerfield fence in the top of the first inning.

"We thought about it and came out with the attitude that we were going going to hit her (Saginaw All-American pitcher Kathy Kinasz)," Ingram said. "We thought we weren't going to have a problem, and we

O Please turn to
Offense, page 7

On the cover:

Lady Lion seniors Renee Weih (left), Krissy Konkol (center), and Diane Miller (right) hoist the NCAA Division II national championship trophy after Missouri Southern's 1-0 victory over California State-Hayward Sunday afternoon in Shawnee, Kan.

Photo by Chad Hayworth

This is a special issue of 'The Chart' in honor of the Lady Lions.

► WINNERS' BRACKET FINAL

Konkol's hit takes squad to next round

By T.R. HANRAHAN
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Senior leftfielder Krissy Konkol knew what she had to do, and she did it.

Her two-out single in the bottom of the seventh inning scored Sharla Snow from third base and gave the Lady Lions a 1-0 victory over Bloomsburg (Pa.) University on Saturday, May 16, in round two of the NCAA

Division II Softball Championships.

"This was going to be my last chance," Konkol said. "It's my senior year, so I thought I might as well do it now."

As the game progressed, Snow knew every scoring opportunity would be crucial.

"When we got to the fifth inning and hadn't scored," she said, "I figured that one run was going to win it."

Despite the low scoring, Southern stranded eight base runners in the contest, and Head Coach Pat Lipira knew something had to give.

"This was a good game—it was a very scary game," she said. "I have been a coach long enough to know that when you have that many opportunities to score and don't, it will come back to haunt you."

The Huskies, however, seemed to be the team haunted by Southern's

offensive persistence and the pitching of Lady Lion sophomore Andrea Clarke.

Jan Hutchinson, Bloomsburg head coach, said she knew one run could be the difference.

"We took them out of their game, and they took us out of ours," she said. "It only takes one score, and

W Please turn to
Winners, page 3

► COACH PAT LIPIRA

'Shock' was initial reaction

By T.R. HANRAHAN

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

If second team All-American Diane Miller were a coach, she says she would emulate Pat Lipira.

"I love Coach Lipira to death," Miller said. "All the people in the program treat us as persons, not just softball players. Coach is positive all the time and can always find something good to say."

"She is definitely a motivator, and if I ever get a coaching job that's what I want to do. I'll take a lot of things with me."

This year's national championship completes Lipira's 11th year as Missouri Southern's head softball coach. She was named 1992 MIAA Coach of the Year when Southern won its second conference title in three years since joining NCAA Division II in 1990. Lipira guided the Lady Lions to a fourth-place finish in the NCAA finals that season and was named 1990 Central Region Coach of the Year.

Before Southern joined the NCAA ranks, Lipira was awarded District 16 Coach of the Year honors four times. She led the Lady Lions to top 10 finishes in national championship tournaments during four of Southern's last five seasons in the NAIA.

Despite these successes, Lipira said winning the national championship is a capstone experience.

"Initially it is a feeling of shock," she said. "Then, just excitement. It is an unbelievable feeling, and I don't know if it has really sunk in yet."

Although Southern swept through post-season play without a loss, Lipira said the ground work was laid

LIGHTING A FIRE



CHAD HAYWORTH/The Chart

Missouri Southern Head Coach Pat Lipira works to inspire a Lady Lions rally during the NCAA Division II championship game Sunday.

off the field.

"Some of the most critical practices were in a classroom and without ball gloves," she said. "Attitude and the team concept; those are the things that win ballgames."

Before the season, Lipira asks team members to fill out goal sheets outlining what they would like to accomplish.

"Some of the team listed that (winning the national tournament) as a goal," she said. "It was fun to watch as we got closer and closer to that goal."

While the national championship may have been a goal, Lipira said she never imagined the team would capture conference, regionals, and the national title without a loss.

"No, I never would have sat down with you before and said that," she said. "We just thought about one

game at a time."

Lipira said the team's spring break trip to Florida gave the Lady Lions confidence they could compete with the best.

"We went 7-1 and beat several nationally ranked teams," she said. "That showed us we had the talent. The team realized, too, that they had the potential to do great things."

Strong fan support was another factor in the team's success, Lipira said.

"One of the most exciting things for me was looking over from the coaching box and seeing this tremendous crowd cheering for the Lady Lions."

"We have the greatest set of parents following us all year. I don't know if we would have done as well without their support."

The Pat Lipira file

► Pat Lipira

► Years: 11

► 1982:

Begins her tenure as coach of the Lady Lions.

► 1983:

Posts her first winning record at Southern.

► 1986: Lady Lions finish 4th in the NAIA. The team wins a record 44 games.

► 1987: Southern again wins 40 games on the way to a 9th-place finish in the NAIA.

► 1990: Southern's 36-9 record in its first year of NCAA Division II competition results in a winning percentage of .800 and a trip to the Final Four.

► 1992: Missouri Southern wins a school record 50 games and captures its first NCAA Division II national softball championship.



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☐ **Winners/From Page 2**

championship play always comes down to that."

Southern seemed to remain confident, despite the six-inning deadlock. Senior Diane Miller was thrown out at the plate in the second inning, but didn't believe that would be Southern's only chance.

"As well as we were hitting the ball, I didn't think that run would be the ball game," she said. "We kept getting runners on base and kept getting runners on base. We knew one of them would score."

"It was definitely a struggle. We played great defense, but we just couldn't get anything across."

Lipira credited Bloomsburg, 43-4, for playing an excellent game.

"Bloomsburg did an outstanding job when we had runners on base," Lipira said. "They have strong, solid

defense. We are used to running and hoping other teams make mistakes. Bloomsburg doesn't do that."

Neither coach wanted to look past the next game, but the possibility of a rematch in the finals was welcomed by Hutchinson.

"I thought we had them today," she said.

Lipira said her team was taking things slowly.

"We are just taking one game at a time," she said. "I am sure everyone wishes they were where we are. I wouldn't trade places with anyone."

Miller paced the Southern attack with a three-for-three performance and Clarke held Bloomsburg All-American catcher Marty Laudato to just one hit.

Bloomsburg relief pitcher Sue Palo shouldered the loss.

► SECOND BASE

Cole gets 'relief' from win

By DAWN ADAMSON

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Teamwork and compatibility are what sophomore second baseman Cindy Cole believes helped Missouri Southern win the national softball championship.

Her first reaction to winning the championship "was relief and an extreme high at the same time—it's hard to explain."

She said a trip to Florida over spring break

Cindy Cole

was a turning point for the Lady Lions.

"We seemed to become a team and work together and have fun," Cole said.

She believes the last game and the plays it took to get the team there are the most memorable for her.

"I knew it was possible, but I didn't think it would really happen."

Cole said the six seniors were part of the reason for the success.

"We had a lot of leadership from



A MIGHTY CUT



CHAD HAYWORTH/The Chart

Sophomore Cindy Cole fouls a pitch off in the championship game.

our seniors," she said. "I don't think I've ever been on a team where all the players worked so hard."

"If they didn't feel that they were doing as well as they could, they were intent to do a lot better."

Cole believes Coach Pat Lipira has made an impact on her.

"I guess as far as myself is concerned, she has taught me to be more of a team player," Cole said.

Cole said her sophomore season was not as exciting as her freshman campaign because she was moved from shortstop to second base.

"I hit better than I did last year,

but I was moved to second from shortstop so I didn't see as much action," she said. "I guess I did OK."

Southern was Cole's choice after attending another school that did not appeal to her.

"It (Southern) gave me another chance to play ball, and I am getting my education," she said.

Cole, from Dewey, Okla., was an all-state player in high school.

"I played on an all-boys' tee-ball team when I was 6 years old, and I never stopped," Cole said. "I started playing fast pitch when I was 12."

► PITCHER

Kopf places school above national win

By DAWN ADAMSON

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Pitcher Cheryl Kopf placed her academic career before softball as she listened to the winners' bracket final via radio at home.

"Well, I was glad for the team, but I didn't get to play," she said. "My biggest priority was graduation."

Kopf missed two weeks of practice to catch up in her classes.

"I really didn't think I was going to make it [to graduation] this semester," she said.

Kopf said the success of the team was due to the teamwork and the players' ability to get along.

"We had a lot of talent, but we had a lot of individuals on the team and it took a while for us to jump in together," she said. "At first I didn't think we would do as well as we did."

"There are teams that have a lot of talent, but they don't work together."

Kopf blanked Northeast Missouri State 7-0 on April 24 in the MIAA Tournament. It would be the last

game she would pitch for Southern.

Kopf, who posted an 8-2 record this season and a 15-2 mark in 1991, believes her contribution to the team was "having a positive attitude."

"I started off the season with back pains, and I missed the first two weeks," she said. "I had an 8-2 record, but I didn't have the kind of season that I would want for a senior year."

"I guess you'd say [I'm proud of] my [0.93] earned-run average, and I did get my first college at-bat this year."

Kopf, from St. Louis, said Southern was her collegiate choice partly because of the academic focus Coach Pat Lipira emphasized.

"I looked at a lot of colleges my senior year of high school and was given a lot of scholarships," Kopf said. "I like the campus and the dorms [at Southern]. Coach Lipira had a lot to do with it. She built up academics."

Kopf attended high school in St. Louis and said she has played softball since she was 6 or 7.

The final two weeks away from the team paid off for Kopf. She received her bachelor's degree in management technology with an emphasis on computer-aided drafting and design on May 16, the same day as the winners' bracket finals.



Cheryl Kopf

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► ALL-AMERICANS

Miller, Clarke grab top honors

By T.R. HANRAHAN
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

In addition to a national championship, the softball team's battery captured All-American honors last week.

Senior catcher Diane Miller made the second team for the third straight year and was joined this year by sophomore pitcher Andrea Clarke.

"I am very proud that coaches from across the nation consider me one of the best," Miller said.

Miller finished the season with a

.365 batting average, and her 41 RBIs were good for second on the team. In her four-year career at Southern, Miller has amassed 201 hits and driven in 132 runs—11 RBI shy of the Division II record. Her career batting average is .336.

Pat Lipira, Missouri Southern head coach, said Miller also is a leader off the field.

"Diane is a great catcher and a great person," Lipira said. "She is also a great role model."

Miller had hoped to make the jump to first-team All-American in

her final season.

"In one sense I am disappointed that I set the goal of being first-team All-American and didn't make it," she said. "But we have had such a successful season and I have had a successful career. I wouldn't change any of it for the world."

Lipira also had hoped Miller would be named to the first team.

"I am extremely disappointed that she did not make first-team All-American before she graduated," Lipira said. "She has won many other honors, and she deserves them

all."

Clarke is quite pleased with her first appearance on the All-American rolls, but it came as a surprise.

"It (making All-American) didn't even occur to me," she said. "I had one goal, and that was making the Final Four. I am really happy."

In joining Miller on the second team, Clarke has a strong supporter.

"She is a neat gal on and off the softball field," Miller said. "She is a great person, and there isn't anything she wouldn't do for her teammates. She always can bring a smile

to your face."

Lipira said Clarke has the ability to take control of a game and maintain a high level of intensity—rarities in a sophomore.

"Nothing rattles her," Lipira said. "Andrea is not a strikeout pitcher. She has to have a good defense behind her, and that's my job. As long as I put a good defense on that field, she will be a great pitcher."

In her two-year career, Clarke has a 52-8 record, including 28 shutouts. Her career ERA is 0.63.

► PITCHER

Clarke ends year with 31-2 record

By T.R. HANRAHAN
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Sophomore pitcher Andrea Clarke has had a good May.

During the month, the second-team All-American won six games, including the national title game, and received other honors, including the Lady Lions Student-Athlete of the Year award.

The national championship was something Clarke has long awaited.



Andrea Clarke

"I was really thrilled to win this," she said. "All through high school we had good teams and finished second. I really had waited to win the big one."

In both of Clarke's seasons with the Lady Lions, she has been selected the team's most valuable player. She was 21-8 as a freshman and 31-2 this season, but is quick to credit others.

"Dink (Diane Miller) is the best catcher I've ever had," Clarke said. "I don't think I would have had such good seasons the last two years if she was not around. I owe her a lot."

Although Clarke has found her greatest success on the mound, she wasn't always a pitcher.

"I started out as a shortstop and second baseman," she said. "I started practicing pitching in the back yard before I ever did it in a game."

"I just kept practicing, and my mother saw that I had a natural talent."

Once she began pitching, Clarke said she enjoyed it.

"I like it because they are always handing you the ball," she said. "You are always in the game; there is no standing around."

Southern Head Coach Pat Lipira said keeping Clarke focused on the game is not a problem.

"Andrea Clarke is very untypical for a sophomore," Lipira said. "When she is on the mound, you're talking intensity. Nothing rattles her. Whatever it takes to get the job done is what she does."

"It is unbelievable for a sophomore to take control of the game the way she does."

Clarke said she does get nervous, but puts that aside.

"I just go in and do it," she said.

Sometimes, however, Clarke takes herself out of the game by not watching some offensive plays.

"On Krissy's (senior Krissy Konkol) single in the Bloomsburg game, I had my head buried," Clarke said. "I was praying for that hit, I guess."

"When we need a hit, sometimes the team says 'Don't watch, Andie.' I guess it's kind of a superstition."

Clarke said she did not expect the Lady Lions to navigate the post season without a loss.

"I never thought about it," she said. "We just played our hardest each game out."

Part of that attitude and part of the reason Clarke came to Southern from Pinckneyville, Ill., is credited to Lipira.

"She (Lipira) didn't get me be around a lot this fall, but when she came back it really made the team feel better," Clarke said. "When I visited Southern I liked the school, and I thought Coach Lipira was a really neat lady—a motivator."

Others seem to feel that way about Clarke.

"She (Clarke) is a neat gal on and off the field," said Miller, senior catcher and second-team All-American.

Lipira agrees with Miller.

"Something about Andrea is she is so likeable," Lipira said. "She is really a great person."

SOPHOMORE SENSATION



CHAD HAYWORTH/The Chart

Sophomore Andrea Clarke delivers a pitch in the 1-0 victory over California State-Hayward Sunday in Shawnee, Kan. Clarke finished the season with a 31-2 record and 0.77 earned-run average in 218 innings.

► CATCHER

Miller to be student assistant in '93

By T.R. HANRAHAN
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Priorities are important to Diane Miller.

The senior catcher for the national champion Missouri Southern softball Lady Lions may have been "born to catch," but said education comes first.

"I knew I wanted to get my education, and softball was a stepping stone. My family has some successful people. We have two doctors and a CPA (certified



Diane Miller

public accountant). I didn't want to let them down."

Miller, from Greeley, Kan., said she was impressed by the way Southern Head Coach Pat Lipira focused on education during Miller's first visit to the campus.

"With Coach, it wasn't softball first," Miller said. "Sure, that was important, but she started talking about education, and that surprised me."

"I'd been enough places where all they talked about was softball, and I was tired of that. I wanted to succeed not just as a player, but as a person. Coach knew that was important to me, and she showed me it was important to her, too."

The visit to Southern was not the

only one Miller made, either. Lipira said she could have played just about anywhere.

"Diane Miller is a Division I catcher, no question," Lipira said. "She visited with Division I schools, but she chose Missouri Southern."

Lipira and Miller agree about why.

"I was honest with her," Lipira said. "I told her she could play right away and make a contribution, and I told her she wouldn't get lost in large classes. Her instructors would know her as a person, not a number."

Miller said this honesty drew her toward the College.

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Miller, page 8

► FIRST BASE

Double play seals win, championship

By BRIAN SANDERS
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

First baseman Stacy Harter said her last putout of the national tournament seemed to take awhile.

"I was on first, and [shortstop] Katrina [Marshall] just threw me the ball," Harter said. "It was like it was coming in slow motion, like the ball was never going to get to me."



Stacy Harter

"But when I did get it, I just held on to it, and the next thing I knew, there was a big dogpile on the [pitcher's] mound."

The double play sealed a 1-0 Missouri Southern victory over California State-Hayward and the NCAA Division II softball crown for the Lady Lions.

The victory did not hit Harter like a ton of bricks, however.

"It didn't hit me until five minutes after it was all over that we'd won the national title," she said. "But it was a great feeling; it's just kind of

hard to explain."

The junior psychology major from Olathe, Kan., said she always believed the Lady Lions could do it; it was just a question of when.

"I knew we had a good team, and I thought it would be possible," she said. "But I didn't really think we could get a clear shot at the national title until we played the tournament in Florida."

"We played some really good teams, and what we did down there brought our confidence up a lot."

Harter, who finished the season with a .349 batting average, believed the Lady Lions' hitting was the biggest key to the team's success.

"Usually, we've got a good team, either offensively or defensively," she said. "But I'm surprised at how we did both this year. I don't think there was anyone who didn't pull through."

Harter also has played volleyball for Southern, a move which she says helped her strengthwise.

"I think because of it (volleyball), I went into this season in better shape," she said. "It gave me more strength, more confidence."

Harter transferred to Southern from Emporia State University because she didn't like the coach's attitude and the general atmosphere of

NOT EVEN CLOSE



T. ROB BROWN/The Chart

Junior first baseman Stacy Harter stretches for a throw in Missouri Southern's 8-1 opening-round victory over Saginaw Valley State Friday night in Shawnee, Kan. Harter, the leadoff batter, had three singles.

the campus.

At Southern, the one thing she has been most impressed by is the attitude and style of Coach Pat Lipira, whom Harter calls an outstanding motivator.

"I saw Coach Lipira's attitude and coaching style, and I wanted to work with that," she said. "Her attitude is really upbeat, and it really rubbed off on us—we were carrying

that attitude on and off the field."

Lipira said she is proud to have Harter as a team member.

"She (Harter) is probably the most excited player in terms of starting," Lipira said. "She is excited at all times to be on this team and in the lineup."

"If someone pinch hits for her, she tells 'em to get a hit—she is never critical of anyone."

After graduating from Southern, Harter plans to go to graduate school to complete a master's degree in psychology. She would like to combine her education with her sports experience.

"I want to work in clinical psychology, but I'd be happy to have a career in sports psychology—kind of connect the two," she said.

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Final Totals for Missouri Southern Lady Lions (50-7)

► BATTING STATISTICS

PLAYER	BA	G	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BB	SO	HBP	SLUG PCT.
Katrina Marshall	.425	56	179	45	76	17	8	3	50	10	8	6	2	.659
Renee Weih	.379	57	145	33	55	7	9	4	40	9	17	14	5	.634
Diane Miller	.365	57	167	38	61	14	7	2	41	4	18	5	1	.569
Leah Ingram	.359	57	156	26	56	12	7	0	31	1	15	7	0	.526
Stacy Harler	.349	43	109	28	38	1	1	0	12	10	10	5	0	.376
Carrie Carter	.348	57	181	44	63	5	2	2	29	17	12	21	1	.431
Krissy Konkol	.335	57	155	47	52	6	6	1	25	9	22	13	4	.471
Sharia Snow	.283	56	120	20	34	3	2	0	17	0	16	13	2	.342
Cindy Cole	.266	56	139	26	37	0	0	0	11	7	7	11	0	.266
Dana Presley	.259	40	85	8	22	0	1	0	10	0	0	4	0	.282
Jaki Staggs	.250	20	8	5	2	1	0	0	1	0	2	2	0	.375
Marcie Waters	.125	7	8	2	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	5	0	.125
Cheryl Kopf	.000	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	.000
Southern totals	.342	57	1453	322	497	66	43	12	268	67	128	106	15	.471
Opponent totals	.196	57	1356	91	266	23	11	1	73	9	36	133	2	.232

► PITCHING STATISTICS

PITCHER	ERA	G/GS	W	L	PCT	SAVE	CG	SHO	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
Andrea Clarke	0.77	36/32	31	2	.939	1	32	17	218.3	149	45	14	25	85
Cheryl Kopf	0.93	10/10	8	2	.800	0	9	5	60.0	48	16	8	3	17
Angie Hadley	1.52	12/8	4	2	.667	1	4	2	46.0	40	17	10	6	18
Sharon Wright	1.94	8/8	7	1	.875	0	3	0	36.0	29	13	10	2	13
Southern totals	1.01	57/57	50	7	.877	2	48	25	360.3	266	91	52	36	133
Opponent totals	4.50	57/57	7	50	.123	0	38	1	344.0	497	322	221	128	106

► RIGHT FIELD

Win 'hasn't sunk in yet' for Ingram

By KAYLEA HUTSON
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Being a member of the NCAA Division II national championship softball team has had little effect on Leah Ingram so far.

"Actually, I haven't really thought about it," the junior right fielder said. "I don't know if it has sunk in yet. I was excited, but it hasn't sunk in yet."

"I just haven't realized that I'm on the best team in the nation."



Leah Ingram

While this win may not seem real to her, Ingram was one of the many responsible for the three-game sweep in the Final Four May 15-17. Her three-run double in the first inning of the first game provided a spark to the team's three-game sweep.

She said during the final game against California State-Hayward, the team appeared "emotionally down." However, once senior outfielder Renee Weih got the team's first hit, the Lady Lions began to pick up momentum.

"It seemed to be that way all season," Ingram said. "The team would

be really quiet, then everybody would explode and we'd go on to get hits."

Ingram said the one thing she will remember most about the national tournament is the team's six seniors.

"Losing the seniors, and knowing it was their last game, made us all pull together and win it for them," Ingram said. "Because we are losing so many players, it was a goal to reach for them."

"By getting that for them—seeing how happy they were and knowing they went all the way their senior year—is what I will always remember."

Ingram said she also will remember the attitudes of the other three teams in the Final Four.

"The California team was really cocky, and the other two teams were not friendly at all," she said. "I don't think any of their players said 'Hi' to our team or that they were glad we were there."

Ingram credits much of the team's success to Coach Pat Lipira.

"She's a great coach and really knows how to motivate people," she said. "As her record shows, her style of coaching really works."

"She knows when to be hard, but she always tells us school comes first."

Ingram credits her own achieve-

ments during the past year to help her receive from Lipira.

"She really taught me a lot of things which have helped me have success," Ingram said. "I think I have matured as a player and as a person."

"I have had success in my personal life which I have brought out on the field. This has helped me grow as a player."

One of the successes Ingram has enjoyed this year is the improvement in her batting average. It climbed from .322 as a sophomore to .359 this season.

"I was able to come through in a pinch during the Pittsburg [State University] game when I hit in the winning run," she said. "It boosted my ego. I may not be the best, but I'm in the top [of the batting order] to help out in different games."

"We have a strong hitting line-up, and everyone hits well as a team. We really didn't have a weak bat in our line-up this year."

Lipira said Ingram's hitting is an important asset to the team.

"Leah's strong point is her bat," Lipira said. "We wanted her in the line-up, and she has worked hard to earn a position in right field."

"She really helps our offense."

A native of Joplin, Ingram transferred to Missouri Southern in 1990. She said she returned home for a

variety of reasons.

"I went to Crowder College for a year, and I had a really bad experience with the coach," she said. "I almost did not want to play ball again."

Ingram said the success of the Lady Lions during the 1990 season, when they advanced to the Final Four, and her knowledge of Lipira changed her mind about softball.

"I knew Lipira from a volleyball clinic she had held at my high school," Ingram said. "She came across as a wonderful person. She had taken a bunch of small girls and made them into really good players. This made me feel like 'I can do this.'"

Ingram said she was a walk-on member of the team and was not actively recruited by Southern.

"I'm not on scholarship," she said. "I just wanted to play ball."

While she is currently playing right field for Southern, Ingram began playing baseball as a shortstop and pitcher. Later, when she switched to softball, she played catcher.

She said she was placed in the outfield because of her arm.

"They put me in right field last year," she said. "I guess I was second-string right field last year. I played last summer in the outfield in summer league, and I worked on it all summer."

□ Offense/From Page 2

didn't."

Kinasz entered the contest leading the nation in victories (42), innings (337), and strikeouts (260). Saginaw Valley State came into the Final Four 50-13 overall.

While Southern bats were hot, Clarke shut down the Lady Cardinal in raising her record to 29-2.

"She is a smart pitcher," Gillis said. "She throws it here (belt-high) or here (at the knees) and gets a call, so you have to lay off the pitches here (at the ankles)."

"We dropped a couple of pop-ups, but it doesn't help if we catch those and still hit dribblers to third and short."

Clarke, appearing in her first national tournament, said she was comfortable from the outset.

"For some reason, all day today I wasn't nervous," she said. "We told ourselves going out that if we play our excellent defense and hit the way we did tonight, nobody could beat us."

"I just tried to keep it low and let them hit it to my defense."

Southern jumped out 4-0 in the first inning on Ingram's double and a single by senior centerfielder Carrie Carter. The Lady Lions expanded their lead to 5-0 in the third inning on a Renee Weih double, but Lipira said even that lead was too close for her comfort.

"That lead is not enough," she said. "When you get to the Final Four, any of these teams are capable of exploding at any time."

MEETING OF THE MINDS



Missouri Southern's infield, consisting of third baseman Sharla Snow, shortstop Katrina Marshall, first baseman Stacy Harter, and second baseman Cindy Cole, meet at the pitcher's mound during Friday night's 8-1 win over Saginaw Valley State in the opening round of the NCAA Division II Final Four.

T. ROB BROWN / The Chart

► SEASON IN PERSPECTIVE

An 'unbelievable' season for team

By RON FAUSS

SPORTS INFORMATION ASSISTANT

Dennis Burns of KVAS Radio really did say it best when he called the Lady Lions' season "unbelievable."

"I tried to come up with something else to say, but 'unbelievable' really was fitting," said Burns, the play-by-play radio voice of the Lady Lions. "The coaches, the players, and the way they came together to win the national title really was unbelievable."

Unbelievable, but not totally unexpected, because the Lady Lions had set reaching the Final Four as one of their pre-season goals.

Back at the beginning of the season, the team faced the tough chore of replacing first baseman Kim Pelow, outfielder Tiffany Carter, and three-year starting second-baseman Robin Herschbach.

At the time, Coach Pat Lipira still was very "fired up" about the upcoming season. She was excited because of the addition of many newcomers who would play key roles for the Lady Lions in the 1992 season.

With the new players coming in, combined with the 10 returning letterwinners, Lipira thought the Lady Lions had a good shot at making a second trip to the Final Four.

Leah Ingram moved from the designated player position, where she hit .222 as a sophomore, to right field, where she raised her average to .359 in 1992.

Lipira shifted Cindy Cole from shortstop, where she was voted the team's best defensive player in 1991, to second base to replace Herschbach.

The big change, however, was the addition of Katrina Marshall at shortstop. Marshall led the Lady Lions with a .425 average, 17 doubles, and 50 RBIs.

These personnel moves, added to the returning veteran players, gave the Lady Lions the chemistry they

would need to go to the Final Four.

Once they made it to the Final Four, the Lady Lions knew they had a good chance to win the national title because the tournament was to be played in Shawnee, Kan., the place where a number of Lady Lions had played summer ball.

It would be as close to a home-field advantage Southern would ever have to win a national title.

Things would not be easy, however, as the first day of the festivities would show. At a pre-tournament banquet, the All-American selections were released. The Lady Lions sat and watched as the first-team All-Americans were named, none of whom played for Southern.

The Lady Lions had the fewest representatives on the All-American squads as only catcher Diane Miller, now a three-time second-team All-American selection, and pitcher Andrea Clarke were named to the second team. The Lady Lions thought they had something to prove.

Southern promptly went out and battered one of the first-team All-American selections, Saginaw Valley State's Kathy Kinasz, in the Final Four opener, and anyone watching had to have the feeling this would be the Lady Lions' year.

However, the team faced a major hurdle in Bloomsburg (Pa.) in the next round. The Huskies were making their third straight Final Four appearance after taking second in 1991 and finishing third in 1990.

"These girls have been here before; they are not going to see anything they haven't seen before," said Jim Hollister, Bloomsburg sports information director. "Southern is also a veteran team that has been here before, but they have not been as close as we have to winning it."

The Lady Lions went on to defeat Bloomsburg and California State-Hayward to claim the national crown and become only the fourth non-California school to win the title.

□ Miller/From Page 5

"On that visit she didn't try to have the upper hand," Miller said. "She was just herself—enthusiastic and glad to be at Southern."

Miller, a physical education major, will not completely sever her ties to the program. She will join Lipira's staff as a student assistant next year.

"I will help with the catchers," Miller said. "I have caught Andie (Andrea Clarke, sophomore pitcher) for two years, so I know her pretty well. I'll try to help them there."

If Clarke's opinion means anything, Miller should do a good job with that responsibility.

"She will know when it will be one of my bad days before I do," Clarke said. "She knows the game,

she calls a great game, and she is very smart."

After helping her successor behind the plate, Miller said she will not be finished with the game.

"I would like to coach at the college level," she said. "I'll be going to graduate school in the fall of 1993."

Miller began her softball career at an early age.

"I've been around it all my life," she said. "I have five brothers and sisters, and softball was the big game."

Miller has toiled behind the plate since she was 7 years old. A cousin was coaching a softball team and needed a receiver.

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► DESIGNATED PLAYER

Weih still gets goose bumps

Senior knew Southern would win

By JOHN HACKER

MANAGING EDITOR

After the Lady Lions' 1-0 victory over Bloomsburg (Pa.) Saturday, designated player Renee Weih knew Missouri Southern had the NCAA Division II softball championship in hand.

The Lady Lions went into the title series against California State-Hayward needing to win one game of the last two in the double-



Renee Weih

elimination tournament.

"I knew we'd win it at that point," Weih said. "Nobody was going to beat us twice at that tournament."

She described the feeling she had after the final win as "incredible."

"It's the best thing I've ever been involved in," the senior said. "I still get goose bumps when I think of [shortstop] Katrina [Marshall] tur-

ning that last double play."

Weih appeared in all 57 games for the Lady Lions and was the second leading hitter on the team with a .379 batting average. She led the team in home runs with four and was third in RBIs with 40.

She said the Lady Lions always thought they had a chance to win. As the end of the season drew closer, they became more confident.

"We took the whole season one game at a time," Weih said. "We worked as a team, and everybody did their part."

When the Lady Lions went into post-season play, the team's confidence increased, she said.

"I think we knew we could do it when we came back and beat Augustana [in the regional tournament]," Weih said. "We proved a lot to ourselves in that game."

Weih originally was recruited for the Lady Lions basketball team and enjoyed a successful season on the hardwood.

She was a walk-on for Coach Pat Lipira's 1990 softball team.

"This season was pretty rewarding considering I hadn't even decided if I was going out for softball this season," Weih said.

She played both softball and basketball at Kirkwood Community College in Iowa, and was selected softball player of the year in southeastern Iowa in 1988.

"I couldn't imagine going to school and not playing softball," Weih said. "I was recruited for basketball, but I decided to walk on for softball."

Lipira said she was excited about having Weih on her team.

"I'm excited not just for her contributions with the bat, but because she is one of the most exciting players," Lipira said.

Weih had good words to say about Lipira.

"She's great," she said. "She's probably the best coach I've ever had. She's always positive."

Lipira said Weih deserved some recognition.

"I think maybe Renee didn't win some awards she deserved for basketball," Lipira said. "It is nice to see her get the recognition."

► LEFT FIELD

Konkol a hometown hero

Making College history motivates team

By KAYLEA HUTSON

EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Two days ago, senior left fielder Krissy Konkol became a star in her hometown of Webb City.

She returned to her old junior high school Wednesday afternoon to sign autographs for the students.

"It was kind of neat; I got to see my former teachers," Konkol said. "My fingers got really tired."

"The kids were saying, 'We listened to the radio: you all did so well.' They were really excited."

Konkol said the fact that the season was over really hit her Monday.

"It was really sad when we turned in our uniforms," she said. "I realized this was it."

"It (winning the championships) was a great feeling. It took us four years to make it here, and we finally did it."

Konkol said it was the fans who made the championship seem real.

"With people you haven't seen in a long time calling you to tell you 'You did a good job', that makes you feel like 'Oh God, we really did it,'" she said. "It's not really the recogni-

tion of the media, but the recognition of the people."

"You really find out how many listened and how many followed the season."

Konkol said she believed at the beginning of the season the championship was possible.

"As the season went on, the feeling got stronger," she said. "Regionals being held here really helped a lot."

"We've been pretty steady all year long, but the last month everyone thought we could do it."

Konkol said one motivating factor for the win was the chance to make Missouri Southern history.

"Dr. [Glenn] Dolence (vice president for student services), said we were only the second championship in the history of the school," she said. "And we are the first national championship in softball. The thought that we can make school history motivated us."

Konkol said what she would remember about the tournament was the way the team pulled together.

"We always had people in scoring position," she said. "Our team as a whole won the tournament, not just one person, but the team as a whole."

"It wasn't just our bench, or just the coach, or just the defense, or just the fans. Everyone played a role."

She said one reason the team was successful was its experience.

"We had a lot of experience on the

field," Konkol said. "Coach placed us well on the field, and we've played together well. We had good bats this year; it didn't matter whether you were the first batter or the ninth batter."

She said Coach Pat Lipira had a "big impact on the team."

"She is a great motivator," Konkol said. "I've never seen a coach so motivated in my life."

"She doesn't just tell you to do something; she shows you once and then expects it to be done."

Konkol said softball is not the only thing Lipira motivates the team about.

"She is really an education-motivated person," Konkol said. "She is a great student herself and strives for people to do as well."

"But it's not just education, but everything in life—family, friends, religion. She expects 110 percent in whatever you do, right or wrong."

Konkol began playing farm club baseball at age 8, and switched to softball at age 10. She played softball until she was 15.

Softball was not her first choice for a college sport. When she graduated from Webb City High School, she had a basketball scholarship to Crowder College.

"I played in Coach [Lipira's] slow-pitch softball team for a summer, and I mentioned to someone that I might like to play fast ball," Konkol said. "Coach told me to come out and try out."

Game-by-Game Results

Game #	Date	Opponent	Score
1	3/9	William Penn College	5-0 Win
2	3/9	William Penn College	4-1 Win
3	3/11	Southwest Missouri	5-0 Win
4	3/11	Southwest Missouri	1-6 Loss
5	3/13	Northeast Missouri	7-0 Win
6	3/13	Quincy College	4-3 Win
7	3/13	Washburn University	7-0 Win
8	3/14	Central Oklahoma	7-5 Win
9	3/14	Central Missouri	8-7 Win
10	3/14	Washburn University	10-3 Win
11	3/20	Florida Southern	12-1 Win
12	3/20	Wayne State (Mich.)	8-1 Win
13	3/21	Southampton College	8-2 Win
14	3/21	Merrimack College	2-0 Win
15	3/23	Augustana (S.D.)	1-0 Win
16	3/23	Nebraska-Omaha	3-7 Loss
17	3/24	SIU-Edwardsville	5-0 Win
18	3/24	Mankato State	3-2 Win
19	3/27	Missouri-St. Louis	6-0 Win
20	3/27	Missouri-Rolla	9-0 Win
21	3/28	Southwest Baptist	5-3 Win
22	3/28	Pittsburg State	1-0 Win
23	3/28	Lincoln University	14-1 Win
24	3/31	Central Missouri	8-0 Win
25	3/31	Central Missouri	1-5 Loss
26	4/3	Northwest Missouri	10-2 Win
27	4/3	SIU-Edwardsville	10-2 Win
28	4/3	Missouri-St. Louis	7-0 Win
29	4/4	Southwest Baptist	8-0 Win
30	4/4	SIU-Edwardsville	2-1 Win
31	4/4	Northwest Missouri	3-0 Win
32	4/7	Southwest Baptist	6-0 Win
33	4/7	Pittsburg State	4-3 Win
34	4/10	Southwest Baptist	10-1 Win
35	4/10	Quincy College	2-9 Loss
36	4/10	Wayne State (Mich.)	7-0 Win
37	4/14	Missouri-St. Louis	5-0 Win
38	4/14	Missouri-Rolla	7-0 Win
39	4/14	Lincoln University	10-2 Win
40	4/15	Northeastern State	3-4 Loss
41	4/15	Northeastern State	2-4 Loss
42	4/18	Northwest Missouri	2-0 Win
43	4/18	South Dakota	8-0 Win
44	4/18	Quincy College	12-0 Win
45	4/18	Missouri Western	5-0 Win
46	4/21	Northeastern State	1-6 Loss
47	4/21	Northeastern State	3-2 Win
48	4/24	Northeast Missouri	7-0 Win
49	4/24	Central Missouri	5-1 Win
50	4/25	Pittsburg State	6-1 Win
51	4/25	Pittsburg State	7-0 Win
52	5/9	Nebraska-Omaha	6-1 Win
53	5/9	Augustana (S.D.)	7-3 Win
54	5/10	Augustana (S.D.)	3-1 Win
55	5/15	Saginaw Valley (Mich.)	8-1 Win
56	5/16	Bloomsburg (Pa.)	1-0 Win
57	5/17	Cal. State-Hayward	1-0 Win

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▶ SHORTSTOP

Marshall paces squad

By JOHN HACKER
MANAGING EDITOR

Junior shortstop Katrina Marshall wanted to stay close to her home in Broken Arrow, Okla., when she transferred to Southern from Northeastern Oklahoma A&M.

"My parents have always been so high on my playing softball, I wanted to stay close to home so they could continue to watch," Marshall said.

That decision paid off handsomely last weekend when Missouri Southern captured the NCAA Division II softball crown.

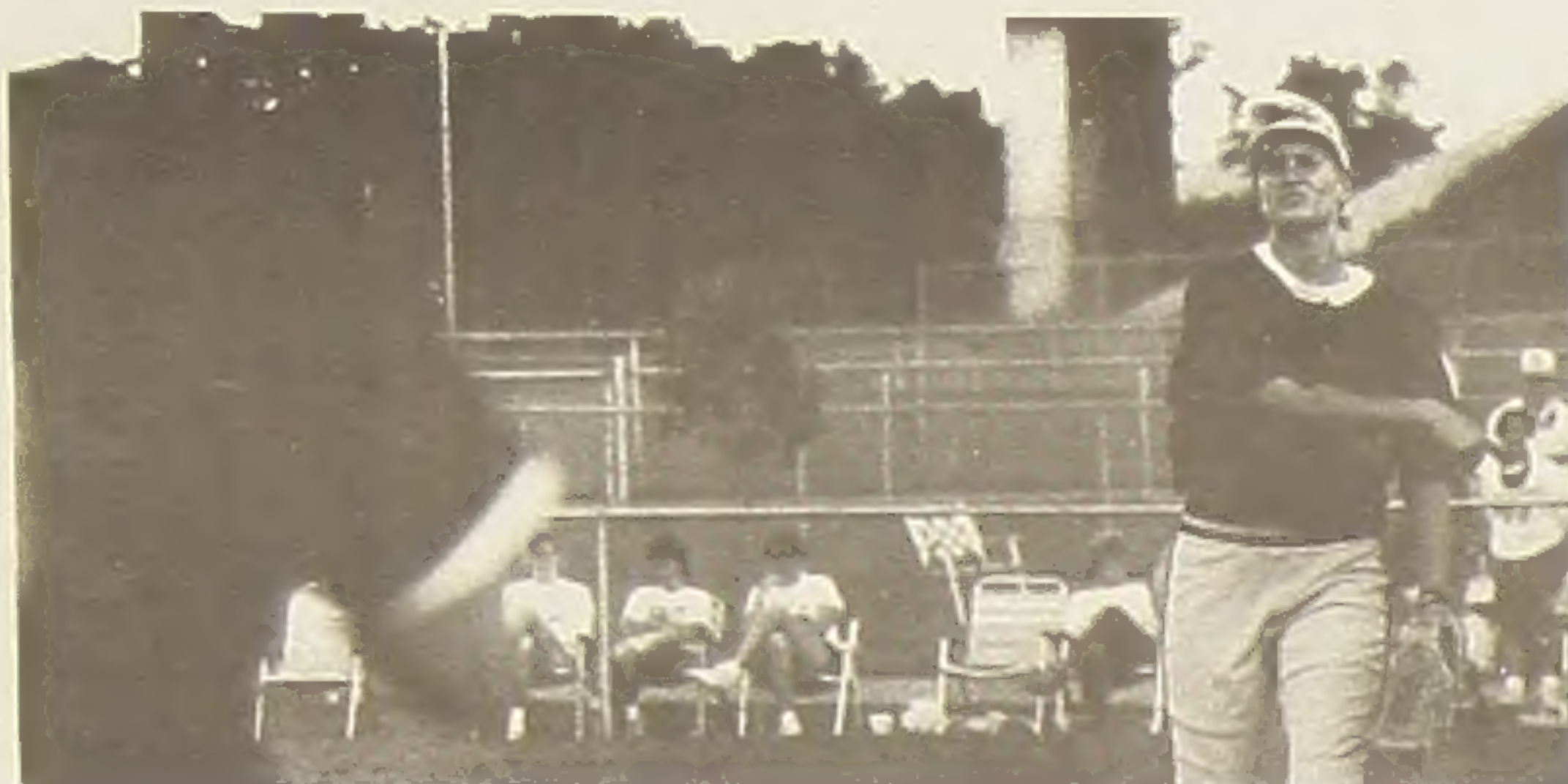
Marshall led the team in hitting this year with a .425 average and 50 RBIs. In addition, she paced the Lady Lions in game-winning hits with 14. She said her offensive production this year surprised her.

"I was pretty surprised to find I was leading the team," Marshall



Katrina Marshall

DECISION PAYS OFF



CHAD HAYWORTH/The Chart

Katrina Marshall, junior shortstop, came to Missouri Southern from Northeast Oklahoma A&M to be closer to family members. Marshall paced the Lady Lions in hitting with a .425 average and 50 RBI.

said. "I had better defense at NEO, but I was able to come through in my hitting."

She said her two home runs in the conference tournament also surprised her.

"I'm normally not a power hitter," Marshall said. "When I hit two over the fence at conference I surprised myself and probably everyone else as well."

She said she realized the Lady Lions could win it all when they took the conference crown April 25.

"I didn't know what we were capable of at the beginning of the year," Marshall said. "I was a trans-

fer student, so I didn't know what we could do."

She said tightening its defense was the top priority of the team at the Final Four.

"One of our biggest goals was to go through the tournament errorless," Marshall said. "I really thought it was possible."

Offense also played a big part in the Lady Lions' three-game sweep.

"We had a lot of big sticks," Marshall said. "Our power hitters came through at the right time. The whole team contributed to the win."

Marshall, a criminal justice major, said she has been playing soft-

ball since she was about 10 years old.

"I've always been a shortstop," she said.

Coach Pat Lipira said Marshall was a big part of the Lady Lions' success.

"She is a gamer," Lipira said. "The higher the stakes, the better Katrina Marshall plays. She has a tremendous arm and exceptional range."

Lipira also praised Marshall's offensive output.

"She is the best hitter average-wise I've had at Missouri Southern," she said. "She can also hit with power. She is dangerous with a bat. She had quite an impact on our team."

▶ RECRUITING

Southern gets top athletes

Division I schools may want to take a page from Coach Pat Lipira's recruiting manual.

Senior catcher Diane Miller and junior shortstop Kristina Marshall are two athletes Lipira says could compete at larger schools.

"Diane Miller is a Division I catcher—no question," Lipira said. "Katrina was an outstanding hitter in junior college, but I have seen a lot of those drop 100 points. That hasn't happened to her at all."

"Katrina is a Division I player, also."

Lipira said Southern interests these athletes because they can play a major role from the beginning.

"I let them know that here they will have the potential of doing great things in softball. If they go to a Division I school they may sit for a couple of years and may not have the opportunities they would have here."

Some of the other advantages Lipira points out are the ones found off the field.

"Basically, I use the same approach admissions uses," she said. "I tell them when they come to Missouri Southern they will have smaller classes and teachers will actually know their names."

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► THIRD BASE

Snow credits her success to Lipira

By CHAD HAYWORTH

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

For Sharla Snow, winning the national championship was the ultimate end for her career at Missouri Southern.

"I thought it was real great because it was my senior year," said Snow, a senior elementary education major. "But to some degree, it hasn't sunk in yet."

Snow said in the beginning, she wasn't sure the Lady Lions would do as well as they did.

"I knew we had potential, but I also knew it would be tough," she said. "When we went to Florida, we played great ball, and again when we got to the conference championships."

Snow credits the relationship of the team members for much of the Lady Lions' success.

"It helped that we we got along off the field," she said. "The team is close, and we played better because of it."



Sharla Snow

Snow said Coach Pat Lipira is the driving force behind the Lady Lions.

"A lot of times, I would get down on myself," she said. "She made me keep my head in the game when I would give up on myself."

Snow said she tried to be a leader to the underclassmen on the team.

"I tried to be there for them," she said, "both during the game and afterwards."

The other teams in the Final Four gave Southern the respect it deserved, Snow said.

"They were ranked under us," she said. "So they knew we were the team to beat."

"Cal State-Hayward was nice to us off the field, but on the field their attitudes changed. I think it's part of their coach's attitude."

Snow, who transferred from Crowder College in Neosho, said she came to Southern because of the possibilities for her here.

"Coach [Pat] Lipira seemed like a real good coach," she said. "They have a good education program here, and all the girls seemed real friendly."

Snow, who has used up her athletic eligibility, will complete her degree next May. She hopes to get a teaching job in the area.

OUT AT THE PLATE



CHAD HAYWORTH/The Chart

Senior third baseman Sharla Snow is tagged out by Cal State-Hayward's Stephanie House during the Lady Lions' 1-0 victory.

► CENTER FIELD

Outfield is home to Carter

By BRIAN SANDERS

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

For the Missouri Southern softball team, taking top honors in the NCAA Division II Softball Championships was a dream come true.

For Carrie Carter, however, winning the national title her senior year was the perfect end to her Southern career.



Carrie Carter

"You could not have written that story any better," the physical education major from Paola, Kan., said.

"I knew we had the talent and the potential. It was just a question of peaking at the right time."

Carter also attributed the team's success this year to "intensity and determination."

"There wasn't a player on this team whose heart wasn't in the game this year," she said. "Coach [Pat] Lipira gets us fired up for every game, and we are all just getting cranked up to win."

"Lipira is a great coach. She treats us not like numbers, but like adults."

Lipira was equally proud of Carter's performance at Southern.

"Carrie is a great clutch player," she said. "When it is a do-or-die situation and you need a hit, she is the one you want up. She is a very focused and intense player."

"She is just a great center fielder. She has robbed more hitters of base hits than any center fielder I've ever had."

Carter's softball career has not always been spent in center field.

"When I was little, I was used to playing the infield," she said. "Then I got involved in an all-star game, and they changed the lineup to where I was playing in center field."

"So the ball got hit out to me, and I picked it up and made this really hard throw all the way from center field to home plate. And I haven't seen the infield since then."

"At first, I whined a little about it, because I thought nothing good ever happened in the outfield. But it's hard to realize as a kid that every position in the game is important."

Although Carter had a .348 batting average this season and scored the winning run of the championship game on Dana Presley's pinch-hit single, she is not concerned with her statistics.

"I don't really want to see my stats for the year, because I don't think they are that important," she said.

► PINCH HITTER

Presley: 'I was looking for high pitch to sacrifice'

By CHAD HAYWORTH

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

For Dana Presley, it will always be remembered as "The Hit." Her one-out, bases-loaded pinch-hit single in the bottom of the fifth inning of the championship game would be all the Lady Lions needed to clinch their first national title.

"I was looking for a high pitch so I could hit it to the outfield for a sacrifice fly," said Presley, a junior criminal justice ma-



Dana Presley

jor. "I was pretty nervous; I felt the whole team was really depending on me for a hit."

Presley grounded a 1-1 pitch to center field, scoring center fielder Carrie Carter. It was only her second appearance at the plate in the entire tournament.

"I didn't think that hit would be the game-winner," she said. "But in the seventh inning, I started getting excited. It's something I'll remember forever."

Pat Lipira, head coach, said she was confident in Presley's ability to step up and get a hit in a pressure situation.

"We had the bases loaded, and Dana is potential power," she said. "Everybody has their moment, and

Dana came through for us."

Presley said the team work ethic and attitude carried the Lady Lions to the title.

"Our team works really hard in practice," she said. "And we're really positive toward each other. That's what got us there."

Winning the national championship was not the priority for this season, Presley said.

"We really concentrated on winning our conference," she said. "We also wanted to go and do well in the regionals and then see what happened."

Presley said the other teams at the Final Four didn't quite know what to think of Missouri Southern.

"They just sort of stared at us," she

said. "I think they knew we were a good team, but maybe they thought they were better because of their All-Americans."

"Coach Lipira told us to just go out and play our ballgame."

Presley said Lipira is the driving force behind the team.

"She has a lot of energy, and she works very hard," she said. "She works us hard in practice and stresses grades."

A switch to first base this season left her with adjusting to do, Presley said.

"I'm used to the left side of the field," she said. "I didn't feel like I really got into the groove. I do think I made Stacy [Harter] work harder in practice."

"It will generate a lot of attention for the College and will improve visibility."

He said the publicity produced by the softball team will "spill over" on to other areas of Southern.

"In most institutions, good things that happen in one area tend to shine on the others," Leon said. "I think this will have a very positive effect on the future of softball, the athletic program, and the College as a whole."

He said the victory served to increase Southern's visibility in the Kansas City area.

"The increased publicity in the Kansas City-Olathe-Johnson County area will help the College and the softball program," Leon said. "That area is a very strong softball recruiting area."

Leon said the College will plan a celebration in the team's honor for sometime next fall.

By JOHN HACKER

MANAGING EDITOR

Victory to generate attention for College

The Lady Lions' victory in the NCAA Division II Softball Championships will bring good publicity to Missouri Southern, said College President Julio Leon.

"Obviously it is a source of great pride for everyone involved in the institution that an organization or group of students would win national recognition," Leon said.



Front row (left to right): trainer Andrea Mauk, Cindy Cole, Krissy Konkol, Cheryl Kopf, Sharla Snow, and Andrea Clarke. Second row: ball girl Amy Ladner, Marcie Waters, Leah Ingram, Diane Miller, Carrie Carter, and Angie Hadley. Back row: Coach Pat Lipira, Stacy Harter, Katrina Marshall, Jaki Staggs, Renee Weih, Dana Presley, Sharon Wright, and assistant coach Dee Gerlach.

► SOFTBALL HISTORY

Beard was team's first coach

Program lacked a home field until 1986

By **JOHN HACKER**
MANAGING EDITOR

Winning the national championship was the latest success in Missouri Southern's 17-year softball history.

While this is the first national title, Sallie Beard, women's athletic director, said the program has been solid since it began in 1975.

"We have had some years when we were lackluster," she said. "But we've had a number of successful years when we were an NAIA school."

Beard, the team's first coach, guided the team in 1975 and 1976. Gerry Albins coached the Lady Lions in 1977 and 1978, then G.I. Willoughby had a three-year stint.

Pat Lipira came in, and the first couple of years she got the program on its feet," Beard said. "It's been a powerhouse under her guidance ever since."

"This is our third year as a full-fledged NCAA member, and we've been to the Final Four twice."

Beard said among the most significant difficulties in establishing

the program was the lack of a permanent field.

"Back then we played wherever we could find a space," she said. "We'd be at Ewert Field one day, at Bassman another day, and sometimes even in Webb City."

"It really had an impact. It's really tough to be competitive when you have to move from one field to another."

Lipira said the lack of an on-campus field was a serious obstacle during her first four years.

"It was tough," she said. "We didn't have a home field, and I didn't know where we were practicing every day."

The lack of a field did not help in recruiting, either.

"When you bring a girl on campus, and she asks you where your facilities are, and you have to say 'We don't have any,' it's tough," Lipira said. "It's almost as bad as it is right now for anyone to have to take a student into that shoebox gym and try to convince them to come here."

The dedication of Lea Kungle Field on April 14, 1986, helped the

team's success greatly, she said.

The field was named after Lea Kungle, a World War II veteran and long-time Joplin resident who died in 1985. Kungle was the wife of Arthur Kungle Sr., a former member of the Board of Trustees. He donated the funds which made construction of the field possible.

Beard also faced the task of coaching two different sports when she guided the softball team.

"I coached softball, with an assistant, at the same time I coached tennis," Beard said. "I was doing double duty and was spreading myself a little bit thin."

Lipira faced similar difficulties throughout much of her tenure here.

"I coached volleyball and softball for the first seven years," she said. "That got extremely difficult in the recruiting and other parts."

"I really loved both sports, but my true love was softball. So when the opportunity came to drop one sport, I chose to drop volleyball."

Lipira said until this year, 1990 was her most memorable year.

Beard said this consistent success has had its effect on the fans, as well as on the program.

Lady Lions softball 1975-92

Year	Coach	W	L	Pct.
1975-76	Sallie Beard	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
1977-78	Gerry Albins	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
1979	G.I. Willoughby	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
1980	G.I. Willoughby	20	23	.465
1981	G.I. Willoughby	22	20	.487
1982	Pat Lipira	14	20	.412
1983	Pat Lipira	18	17	.514
1984	Pat Lipira	19	16	.543
1985	Pat Lipira	22	17	.630
1986	Pat Lipira	44	13	.772
1987	Pat Lipira	40	16	.714
1988	Pat Lipira	29	18	.617
1989	Pat Lipira	31	22	.585
1990	Pat Lipira	36	9	.800
1991	Pat Lipira	36	8	.818
1992	Pat Lipira	50	7	.877

Previous national tournament results

1985 (NAIA)

Mo. Southern 11, Mary's (Tex.) 1, Mo. Southern 0
Mo. Southern 12, Bloomfield 0
Winthrop 2, Mo. Southern 1 (Tie, 9th)

1986 (NAIA)

Mo. Southern 11, Wheeling 0
St. Mary's (Tex.) 2, Mo. Southern 0
Mo. Southern 1, St. Xavier 11
Mo. Southern 2, Wis.-Parkside 0
Mo. Southern 3, Washburn 2
St. Mary's (Tex.) 4, Mo. Southern 3 (4th)

1987 (NAIA)

Mo. Southern 4, Davis & Elkins 11
IUPUI-Indianapolis 2, Mo. Southern 11
Mo. Southern 3, St. Mary's (Calif.) 1
Francis Marion 2, Mo. Southern 0 (Tie 7th)

1989 (NAIA)

Mount Mercy 2, Mo. Southern 1
Mo. Southern 4, Davis & Elkins 1
West Florida 1, Mo. Southern 0 (Tie 9th)

1990 (NCAA Div. II)

Cal State-Northridge 4, Mo. Southern 2
Bloomsburg (Pa.) 4, Mo. Southern 3